A

SERMON

PREACH'D to the

SOCIETIES

FOR

Reformation of MANNERS,

IN THE

Cities of *London* and *Westminster*,

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By *JOHN SHOWER.*

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ISAIAH LIX. 4.

None calleth for Juſtice.

THIS certain, that the Principles and Duties of Natural Religion are ſuppoſed, confirmed, and enforced by the Chriſtian. The Grace of God, which bringeth Salvation, teacheth and obligeth us, to live ſoberly and righteouſly, as well as Godly. But how aſtoniſhing is the Kindneſs and Condeſcenſion? that God has ſhown ſuch regard to thoſe parts of Morality, which relate to the Good of Mankind, as to prefer them before his own Worſhip? That the Duties of the Law of Nature, are to take place of thoſe of poſitive Inſtitution; That he had rather we ſhould expreſs our Love to one another, and by Charity and Mercy do good in the World, than be honoured himſelf by Sacrifice, when that cannot be without Prejudice to our Neighbour. It muſt therefore be a very

miſtaken Notion of Religion, to imagine that any can be a very good Chriſtian, that is not a very good Man. For Religion is not deſigned only for the Happineſs of particular Souls in another Life, but for the Welfare of Mankind, as united in Societies in this World. And for that purpoſe God hath appointed Magiſtrates as his Ordinance, and required our Obedience for Conſcience ſake. He hath commanded us to pray for Kings, and all in Authority under them, and to aſſiſt them to our utmoſt, that they may not bear the Sword in vain. We are to riſe up for them againſt the Evil-doers, and ſtand up for them againſt the Workers of Iniquity. We are to forward and promote the Adminiſtration of *Juſtice*, and even to *call for it*, where that is needful, and may ſerve a publick Good.

Pſal. cxvi. 9.

THE Neglect of this, and the general Indifferency and Remiſneſs of private Perſons, as to the Execution of Juſtice, is here complained of, as one of thoſe things that made the *Jews* in danger of publick Judgments. For when National Calamity is here threatned, this is aſſign-

ed as one of those things that procured it, That *there was none called for Justice, i. e.* very Few amongst them did concern themselves, as private Persons, to have Publick Justice duely administred. And 'tis further added, or *pleadeth for Truth*; or, as some render the Words, *Judgeth truely.* That is, Private Persons, are careless and indifferent as to all such Matters; and Publick Magistrates, are negligent and faulty as to what belongs to them.

'TIS the former Expression, *None calls for Justice*, that I am now to consider, with respect to *Private* Persons: For, thanks be to God, there are Faithful Magistrates in and about the City, who are ready to do their Duty in the Administration of Justice, if Private Persons will but do theirs in calling for it.

MY Design from this Passage, is, *First*, To manifest that this is the Duty of Private Persons, which will at once vindicate your worthy Undertaking, and encourage you to proceed, and perswade others to joyn with you. *Secondly*, To consider some of the Objections, that may dishearten others from doing so, and

weaken your own Hands. *Thirdly*, I ſhall take the Liberty to adviſe ſome things, that may help to attain your great End, the Reformation of Manners, and may render your Endeavours herein accepted with God, and all good Men. And, *Laſtly*, From ſeveral Conſiderations, I ſhall endeavour to ſtir you up to call for Juſtice.

I. FOR the Proof, That this is a *Duty* in Private Perſons, we need but Conſider how it is here complained of in the *Jews*, as one of thoſe Iniquities which ſeparated between God and them, and cauſed him to hide his Face, that he would not hear their Prayers, *Ver.* 2. It is joyned with Lying and Cheating, with Violence and Murther, and other Abominations, that few or none had the Zeal and Courage, the Honeſty and Integrity, to excite and aſſiſt the Magiſtrate in the Adminiſtration of Juſtice, whereby the Honour of God might be aſſerted, and the Authority of his Laws maintained, by the Puniſhment of Tranſgreſſors. To make you the more ſenſible that this is part of your Duty, I ſhall beſpeak you. *Firſt*, As *Men*, and Members of a publick Society, and

and ſo argue from the Principles of Natural Religion. *Secondly*, As *Chriſtians*, who acknowledge the Holy Scriptures, and profeſs to own Revealed Religion. And, *Thirdly*, Conſidered as in a private Capacity, with reference to your own Families and Relations; where I ſhall manifeſt it to be, not only your Duty, but your Intereſt, to be concerned for the Adminiſtration of Juſtice.

1. AS MEN. Our general Obligations to Mankind, as we are Men, are more antient, and more indiſpenſible, than any particular ones that can be ſuperadded; ſo that by the Law of Nature we are bound to do good to all Men, as we have Opportunity, and to promote the Good of the Place where we live, and of the Community whereof we are Members. From a Principle of Love to the Society and to our ſelves alſo: for I my ſelf and mine ſhall be involved in the Common Ruine. This is ſo Evident, that many an honeſt Heathen would have condemned him as unworthy the Name of a Man, who ſhould prefer his Eſtate, his Reputation, or Life, before the Common Good. Now when the Laws of God, and the

Land, have provided for the Puniſhment of ſuch Offences as manifeſtly tend to the Ruine of the Society, whereof I am a Member, it muſt needs be my Duty, by the Law of Nature, to do what I can to prevent it. For if ſuch and ſuch Laws are for the Publick Good, and the Peace and Happineſs of a Nation is promoted by obſerving them; and the Tranſgreſſors of ſuch Laws be not puniſhed, the Laws themſelves are inſignificant, and the publick Miſchiefs, they were deſigned to prevent, cannot be kept off, for want of Execution.

EVERY one reckons by the Light of Nature, it is his Duty to aſſiſt his Neighbour, as a *Witneſs* or otherwiſe, that Right may take place, and Juſtice be adminiſtred in *Civil Matters*; that in caſe his Perſon be aſſaulted, or his Goods ſtolen, or what is his juſt Due be detained, *&c.* he may have the Satisfaction of the Law; There is the ſame, or greater Reaſon, in *Criminal* Matters, where the Puniſhment of the Offence is for the Honour of GOD, and for the Publick Good; and where a Reparation can no otherwiſe be made, but by the Suffering of

of the Offender, which in Matters of Property may be done by the Payment of ſo much Money.

AND how can an honeſt Magiſtrate, for want of Legal Conviction, puniſh the Guilty, if he never ſo much deſire it? Let him be never ſo well qualified for his Office, and reſolv'd to be faithful, yet if none will complain of the Breach of the Laws, and give him an Account by whom they are broken, and bear Witneſs in order to Legal Conviction, what can he do as a Terror to evil Doers? It will ſignifie little to have never ſo many good Laws, or good Magiſtrates: For Offenders will be as no Offenders, if there be none to witneſs againſt them: And the wiſeſt and beſt Laws will be as none if they be not executed. And how can they be put in Execution by the Magiſtrate, if there be none to acquaint him by whom they are tranſgreſs'd, *i. e.* if none will *call for Juſtice?* In many caſes, where the Number, Intereſt, and Character of the Offenders is conſiderable, a Magiſtrate may not have the Courage to do it, if he had the Opportunity, without the Countenance and Encouragement of other Men. And

yet

yet moſt uſually, the Puniſhment of one Great Criminal might do more good, than of twenty meaner ones, as his Example and Influence did more hurt. This muſt needs hearten and encourage a good Magiſtrate to do his Duty, when, beſides the Authority of his Office, and the Power of the Law, and his own particular Inclination, he is back'd and aſſiſted by his Fellow Citizens: For hereby his Reputation will be the better ſecured, if he be faithful: In all Converſations and publick Meetings, there will be ſome of his Neighbours and Acquaintance, ready to abet his Cauſe, if he ſhould be reflected on. And this will facilitate the Adminiſtration of Juſtice by ſucceeding Magiſtrates: And if any of you be hereafter call'd to ſerve your Country in a publick Station, what you do now in a private Capacity will enable you to do more Good hereafter in a publick one.

AS to Treaſons, and Murders, and Thefts, Men do not reckon themſelves at liberty to be *Neuters*, but theſe leſſer Crimes make way for greater. And it is the Intereſt of any Government, and even of the Supream Magiſtrate himſelf, that

that ill Manners be corrected, and leſſer Criminals puniſhed; becauſe it is by the Commiſſion of leſſer Crimes, that Men are prepared and hardened to venture upon greater. If the Laws, that threaten only Correction, Impriſonment, or a Fine, be neglected and deſpiſed; ſuch as threaten Death, will in time have little Power: For he that will Swear and Curſe, and be Drunk, and commit Adultery, and matters not the Hazard of his Health and Life, by a Courſe of Debauchery, will in a little time be hardened, ſo as to deſpiſe Death by the Sword of Juſtice. 'Tis therefore the Intereſt of any Government, to have ill Manners corrected, as a proper Means to prevent greater Crimes, where the Puniſhment is Capital.

IT ought likewiſe to be conſidered, that there is the ſame Contempt of Authority, if not greater, in tranſgreſſing thoſe Laws, to which leſſer Puniſhments are annexed, as where the Offender muſt *die* for it; the Difference of the Puniſhment, is not becauſe there is leſs Contempt of the Law, and of the Law-giver, in the one caſe, than in the other; but becauſe the evil Conſequences are not the ſame:

For the Voluntary allowed Neglect or Breach of any part of the Law, renders us guilty of the Violation of the whole, which was enacted by the ſame Authority. You muſt therefore remember, that tho' ſuch Inſtances of Immorality, as you endeavour to puniſh, have not ſuch an immediate Tendency, as Murder and Treaſon, to bring publick Confuſion and Ruine; yet not only doth the one prepare for the other, but there is as manifeſt a Contempt of Divine and Humane Authority in theſe, as in the moſt Capital Offences.

BUT whether the Crimes be greater or ſmaller, the Ends of Puniſhment are ſuch as cannot be attain'd, without the Aſſiſtance of private Perſons, that the Laws made for the common Good be put in Execution.

THE Three great Ends of Puniſhment, are either, *Firſt*, The Amendment of the particular guilty Perſon. *Secondly*, The making Others better, or preventing the like Sin in others by the Warning given. Or, *Thirdly*, The Publick Security, promoted, by upholding the Honour of the Law, and vindicating the Authority of the Law-giver.

1. ONE

1. ONE End of Puniſhment, annexed to good and righteous Laws, is the Amendment of the guilty Perſon. Tho' Puniſhment alone will not teach him how to amend his Life; it may convince him that it needs to be reformed. He knows by what he ſuffers, that he hath not done as he ſhould, and ſo may next conſider how to do better, and reſolve upon it. Many Men, by their *Calamities* in the World, by Sickneſs, and Poverty, and Shame, and the like, have been brought to conſider their evil Ways, and, we hope, to amend them. Much more may we hope it, when the Suffering is the immediate direct Puniſhment, inflicted by the Laws of the Country for ſuch a Crime. In that caſe, the Offender cannot turn his Eyes from the Occaſion and Cauſe of his Suffering, or impute it to any thing elſe, as Men commonly do in other caſes. For Inſtance, If a common Swearer be puniſhed in his Purſe, or a lewd Perſon ſent to the Houſe of Correction; they cannot impute their Sufferings to any other Cauſe, than to the Faults for which they have been puniſhed. And who knows, but that God, who delights not in the Death

of

of Sinners, may give them Repentance, and their preſent Sufferings help to ſave them from Eternal ones? There have doubtleſs been many, who have ſinned themſelves within a Step of Hell, who have run into the vileſt Debaucheries, and ſo to the very Brink of Ruine, that the very Flames of the bottomleſs Pit have even ſinged their Garments, and taken hold of the Hair of their Heads; who have yet been plucked as Firebrands out of the Burning, and have unfeignedly repented, and turned to God even in *Newgate*. Concerning divers ſuch, we may hope, that tho' they fell under the Sword of the Civil Magiſtrate; yet, by Repentance towards God, and Faith in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, they eſcaped Eternal Condemnation. And there might be more Inſtances of this kind, were there more care taken to aſſiſt condemned Priſoners before their Execution; our Charity in preparing them for another World, might be more ſucceſsful, than uſually it is upon Perſons on a ſick Bed.

BUT while I mention Charity to the Souls of Condemned Malefactors, I am perſwaded there would be fewer ſuch, if

better

better Proviſion were made of *Work* and *Work-houſes* for the Poor: Becauſe Idleneſs and Poverty are the great Temptations to many of thoſe Vices that fill the Priſons and Houſes of Correction. There is more hope however, where the Puniſhment is ſhort of Death, and the guilty Perſon it may be comes from a good Family, and had Religious Parents, and hath but lately caſt off the Fetters of his Education, when 'tis not long that he hath been taken in the ſnare of the Devil, there is the more hope that ſuch a one may be brought to conſider himſelf, by ſuch leſſer Puniſhment, and ſo reform.

2. ANOTHER End of Puniſhment, is to warn others not to tranſgreſs in the like kind. And ſo it is rather an Act of Mercy, than Revenge; the End of it not being ſo much to retaliate the Evil on the Offender, as to do good to Others, and to keep them from the like Offences. *Smite a Scorner*, ſays the Wiſe Man, one that is an obſtinate and inſolent Offender, *and the Simple will beware.* Such as were like to ſin by Inadvertency or ill Example, will 19 Prov. 25.

will take warning. *When the Scorners are Punished, the Simple are made Wise.* If one Sinner destroy much good, if one root of Bitterness may defile many; the Impunity of Criminals upon this account must needs be a great Mischief, as likely to spread the Infection through the whole Neighbourhood, Street, and City: And so 'tis every Mans concern, to have his Neighbours Child or Servant Punished for such Faults, from which he would preserve his own: And I need not tell you how much greater Influence bad Examples have, than good ones; you know that *Health* is not communicated, as Diseases are.

25 Chap. 11.

3. PUNISHMENT is an Act of Government, and hath relation to the Law; and so one End of it is to preserve the Authority of the Laws, and the Honour of the Magistrate, who is concerned for the Publick Good.

* See the Bishop of *Worcester*'s Discourse of the Sufferings of Christ. *Chap.* 1. *Grotius* de Satisf. Cap. 2.

* The reason, here, of Punishment, is not so much because a Law is broken, as because, if it be not punished, the Authority of the Law, and Lawgiver, can never

never be upheld; and that is neceſſary, or the Community can never be preſerv'd. And where the Offence to be puniſhed, is againſt GOD and the Publick Laws; the Puniſhment is due to the Honour of GOD, and to the Common Good; and 'tis not in a Private Mans Power to forgive the Iujury to the Publick, as he may do a pecuniary Debt that is owing to himſelf. *Vengeance*, ſays God, *is mine*; i. e. the inflicting of Puniſhment belongs to me. In him all manner of Right is primarily and originally lodged, as the great Lord and Proprietor of all. And every Injury and Injuſtice to another, either private, or publick, redounds upon Him as the Governour of the World. The deciſion of Right and Wrong, the diſtribution of Rewards and Puniſhments, appertains to him. *Vengeance*, as taken for the inflicting of Puniſhment, is his undoubted Prerogative, his unalienable Right: It belongs to him, and to thoſe only whom he appoints to be *his Miniſters to execute WRATH on ſuch as do evil.* And we are not only to ſuppoſe the reaſon of this to be the Danger that may accrue to

Society by the Impunity of Crimes, but becauſe of the Diſhonour and Affront that is offer'd to GOD, as the Governour of the World. He aſſumes Anger, Wrath, and Jealouſie, to ſhow he minds his own Glory, and will not bear Contempt, but avenge it. And to make Tranſgreſſors ſuffer, is for the Reparation of God's injur'd Honour, as well as for the Happineſs of Society. It cannot therefore unbecome a good Man to call for *Juſtice*, *it being his Duty on all theſe accounts* to further and promote it.

THESE things will concern us as we are Men, under the Obligation of the Law of Nature.

2. LET me beſpeak you, as you are *Chriſtians*, and profeſs to own Revealed Religion, and the Authority of the Holy Scriptures. 'Tis not the duty of Magiſtrates and Miniſters only, but of all the Followers of Chriſt, to be the Salt of the Earth, and the Lights of the World, in their ſeveral places. Every Member is bound to promote the welfare of the whole Body, according to his Capacity. Every Chriſtian muſt imitate his Maſter, who went about doing

doing good. He is created, and redeemed, and ſanctified, for it, as the Tree is made for the Fruit. Many devout Perſons may think, if they were Rich enough to live without bodily Labour, and could ſpend all their time in Meditation, and Prayer, and hearing Sermons, *&c.* That this were the happieſt Life in the World. The *Popiſh Nuns* and *Fryars* are under this miſtake. But no Man is made for himſelf alone, we are Members of Society: We muſt do good to Others, and in doing ſo, we take Care of our own Salvation. Our Lord has taught us to pray, that the Name of God may be Sanctified, and ſhall we ſilently ſuffer it to be profaned? And his Kingdom come, and ſhall we do nothing that it may take place? And his Will be done on Earth, as in Heaven; without endeavouring this, we contradict our own Prayers. And when we deſire the Will of God may be done, we mean it by *Others*, as well as our ſelves. And is it not the Will of God, that ſuch Offences ſhould be Puniſhed? We beg Forgiveneſs of our own Sins, and the Sins of

the Nation; Can we do it uprightly, and not endeavour Reformation? We may not ſuffer Sin upon Others, any more than allow it in our ſelves. The Scripture Examples, of *Zerubbabel*, *Nehemiah*, *Ezra*, *&c.* may be urged to this purpoſe, as you have heard in ſome former Sermons, and I hope with very good Effect.

BUT let me here reaſon with you a little. Is it fit for *Chriſtians* to be concerned, that Juſtice be done between Man and Man, as to their Lives, Eſtates, and Civil Rights; and ſhall we be more indifferent as to thoſe Laws, where the Honour of GOD, and of our Bleſſed Redeemer, are more immediately concerned? If a notorious Cheat or Thief be diſcovered and taken, what general Rejoycing is there in the City! What Crowds will attend him to the Juſtice of Peace, to the Priſon, to the Seſſions-Houſe, to the Pillory! Is it only, becauſe your ſelves may one time or other be injured by ſuch a Crime, or have been ſo? Doubtleſs, *in Criminal Caſes*, there is more reaſon to aſſiſt; and more reaſon to rejoyce, as theſe Offen-

Offenders are the Peſts of Humane Society; and as their Crimes do carry an open Affront to Heaven. Is the cheating of you of a little Money ſo great a matter, the defrauding you in a Bill of Exchange, or a Bank Note, ſo very conſiderable, that every one is ready to aſſiſt to have ſuch a Fellow puniſhed? And is there not more reaſon in the other Caſe? Is the value of Ten or Twenty Pounds more to be regarded, than the Vertue, Honour, Safety, Health, Life, and Soul, of your Relations and Neighbours, which may be corrupted and deſtroyed by unpuniſhed Vice, and Examples of Debauchery?

YOU know, you are not to intice and tempt Others to Sin; but are you not likewiſe to prevent others from being tempted? You may not lay a ſtumbling block in anothers way, to make him fall; but if you ſee him ready to caſt himſelf down a Precipice, will you do nothing to prevent it? *Nehemiah* charges the Rulers for breaking the Sabbath, becauſe they did not reſtrain others from bearing Burthens. How dear did it coſt *Ely*, and his Houſe,

that, when his Sons made themſelves vile, he reſtrained them not! Tho' *Pilate* ſpake to the *Jews* on the behalf of Chriſt as Innocent; yet is he charged with his Murther, for not doing all that he could to hinder it. We may many ways *partake of other Mens Sins*, and this doubtleſs is one, If we do not what we may and ought to prevent them. In which Caſe we likewiſe ſhare in all the ill Conſequences of their Iniquity, in all the Miſchiefs that follow upon the City and Nation, by ſuch Impunity. Let me expreſs this in the better words of * *Biſhop Sanderſon*, 'You countenance, 'ſays he, the Diſorders, that 'by Juſtice may be ſuppreſſed; You 'diſarm Innocency, that Juſtice would 'protect; You baniſh Peace, which by 'Juſtice is maintained; You are Tray-'tors to the King and his Throne, 'which by Juſtice is eſtabliſhed; and 'you pull down on the City and the 'Nation the publick Plagues and Judg-'ments of God, which the Execution of 'Juſtice would avert. Is it not then your duty, as Chriſtians, to promote and

* Serm. 1. ad Magiſtratum. 29 Job. 14.

and forward the Execution of Juſtice, when thereby you contribute to ſuppreſs Diſorders, to protect Innocency, to maintain Peace, to ſecure the King and State, and to turn away publick Judgments from the Land?

SIRS, We are all Chriſtians, the Duty is common to us all, the Obligation is equal. 'Tis what we are all concerned in, and agree in; becauſe by our *Baptiſm* we are all engaged to fight under the Banner of Chriſt, in a conſtant Warfare againſt the Devil and his Angels. And 'tis obſervable, that when our Saviour was charged as a Confederate with Satan in working Miracles, he tells us, (and it is repeated by three Evangeliſts) that he was ſo far from that, that he looked upon that Man for his Enemy, who would not ſerve him in oppoſition to the Devils Kingdom and Intereſt. *He that is not with me, is againſt me; and he that gathereth not with me, ſcattereth abroad*, Matth. 12. 30. Chriſt hath his Kingdom to carry on in the World, and Satan hath his: You muſt either be for advancing the Kingdom of Chriſt againſt the Devil, or

you joyn in Confederacy with the Devil againſt the Son of God and his Kingdom. I remember what *Jehu* ſaid in another caſe, but not very different, (when he was to Execute Judgment, by Gods command, on the whole Houſe of *Ahab*,) *Who is on my ſide?* cryed *Jehu*, Who is on my ſide? I may put the like Queſtion this day, or rather beg that you would to your ſelves, *Which ſide will you take?* For you cannot be *Newters*. Which ſide will you take; For Reformation? Or for Profaneneſs? For ſuppreſſing Vice, or for letting it alone? That is, Will you be *for Chriſt*, or *for the Devil?* You muſt be Treacherous to your Lord, and unfaithful to your Baptiſmal Vow, if you do not joyn heartily againſt the Intereſt of the Devil, in ſo plain and publick a Caſe as this.

AND among all ſorts of Chriſtians, that have written againſt Perſecution, and about the Power of the Magiſtrate as to Matters of Religion, we find that the greateſt Sticklers for the moſt *unlimited Toleration*, as to different Sentiments about Matters of Faith, and Worſhip; do yet

all

all agree, that theſe Inſtances of Immorality do properly come under the Cognizance of the Civil Magiſtrate, as having a mighty Influence upon Publick Societies, being very prejudicial to the Welfare of it. So that no Man can complain of Perſecution for his Opinions, when he is puniſhed for ſuch groſs Immoralities againſt the Laws of God and the Land. No *Chriſtians*, no *Proteſtants*, who differ in leſſer Matters as to Faith and Worſhip, will plead for the Allowance of ſuch Corruption of Manners, and Debauchery of Life, as you endeavour to ſuppreſs.

IF it ſhould be ſaid, that I am miſtaken here: For all Chriſtians do not agree about *the Morality of the Sabbath*, and therefore it is hard to puniſh Men for the Profanation of it. *I anſwer*, that granting ſome good Men may have given Directions about the Obſervation of the Lord's Day, that cannot be warranted from the Word of God, as reducing it too much to a weariſome bodily Exerciſe, yet have we enough to confirm our Opinion and Practice as to *the Lord's Day*, by conſidering the firſt Original and Inſtitution of the Sabbath, and the Matter

of

of the *Fourth Commandment*; (And when all the other Nine are granted to be of univerſal and perpetual Obligation, 'tis hard to conceive, that *one* of the *ten* ſhould concern *only the Jews*;) And conſidering the Practice of the Chriſtian Church in all Ages, and the Experience of a ſpecial Preſence and Bleſſing of God on the Publick Chriſtian Worſhip on ſuch a Weekly Day of Reſt; and that ſerious Religion was never obſerved to thrive and flouriſh, or be long preſerved, in any City, Family, or particular Soul, where this was neglected; Theſe, and the like things, are ſufficient for our Juſtification. But you my Brethren, that are Members of the *Church of England*, are peculiarly obliged to ſuppreſs the Profanation of the Weekly Sabbath; becauſe every Lord's Day, and oft'ner, you beg of God, *to incline your Hearts to keep the Fourth Commandment*, and that the *Fourth*, as well as the other *Nine*, may be *written upon your Hearts*, and obeyed in your Lives. Beſides what might be quoted out of the *Homilies*.

3. HA-

3. HAVING mentioned this of the Sabbath, I proceed, to conſider you in your Families, and Shops, and private Relations, and ſo to manifeſt it to be your *Duty* and *Intereſt*, on that account, to have the Laws put in Execution, and particularly againſt the Profanation of the Lord's Day. For while your Children and Servants are employed in Civil Buſineſs, and Secular Affairs, on the Week-days, they are freed from many Temptations: But if they be not employed in Religious Exerciſes on the Lord's Day, if they are left to themſelves, to do nothing, or to do what they pleaſe; to ſtay at home, or go abroad; to attend the publick Worſhip, or not attend it, you expoſe them to ſuch Temptations, as many ways may be Injurious to your ſelves, and in the end Deſtructive to them. There are Few, that come to a miſerable ſhameful Death in this World, but acknowledge this, and date their Wickedneſs and their Ruine from their neglecting to keep holy the Lord's Day.

DO but Conſider how much the Peace and Safety of your Families, the Trade, the

the Riches and Proſperity of the City, (which conſiſts of particular Families,) is owing to good Laws, and to the Terror of the annexed Puniſhments; and you will hereby diſcern your own *Intereſt* ſo wrapp'd up in the Publick, as to infer your *Duty* to promote the Adminiſtration of Juſtice. Murders would be more frequently committed, were it not for the Terror of the Law. Robberies and Burglaries would be more common, were it not for the Severity of the Puniſhment. And that leſſer Thefts and Frauds, in buying and ſelling, are more common, is becauſe the Penalty is ſmall if diſcovered, and the Means of Proſecution chargeable. There is very much reaſon to think, that 'tis not *Conſcience*, ſo much as the Dread of Temporal Puniſhment, that makes you ſafe in your Houſes, and quiet in the Poſſeſſion of what you enjoy.

AS to the Suppreſſion of Profaneneſs and Debauchery, let Parents and Maſters conſider it, that 'tis more than poſſible, that ſome of thoſe Offenders, (who might be reclaimed by ſeaſonable Correction, but for want of it go on, and are hardened in Sin;) may be related hereafter to

ſome

ſome of your Families, by the Marriage of a Son or Daughter, or other Relation: And ſo you and yours may ſmart by the ill Effects of that Wickedneſs, which Faithfulneſs and Zeal in your preſent Undertaking might reſtrain and prevent.

NEED I mind you of the Routs and Riots, the Quarrels, and Contentions, and Murthers, occaſioned by *Drunkenneſs*; of the Poverty and Ruine of a Multitude of Families, by that, and other expenſive Vices: Whereby Men not only undo themſelves, but rob thoſe for whom they ought to make Proviſion. Can you be ignorant of the horrid Confuſion in Families, and the ſad Train of other ill Conſequences, as to Health, and Life, and Honour, and Eſtate, which is the Fruit of Lewdneſs and Uncleanneſs? Are you not ſenſible of the Advantage to your Families, by Purity, and Chaſtity, and keeping the Marriage Bed undefiled? and that by Drunkenneſs and Uncleanneſs Men are prepared for any other Villany they may be tempted to commit?

CAN you be ſafe, as to your Perſons or Eſtates, good Name, or Life, while, by

by common and cuſtomary Swearing, the Reverence and Awe of an *Oath* is loſt, and the Obligation of it forgotten? What Truſt or Dependance can there rationally be given to the Teſtimony of ſuch a one, as a *Witneſs* or *Juryman*, who daily takes the Name of God in vain in his ordinary Diſcourſe? To this is owing very much the dreadful Guilt of Perjury and Subornation, that is more complained of in this Age, than it may be in any other.

AS to the Buſineſs of *Trade*, let me reaſon with you, Would you not ſooner truſt a ſober honeſt Man, that hath but half the Eſtate of a lewd Debauchee? As knowing, in a little while the latter may be brought to a Morſel of Bread; and that many have been ſo, who once fared deliciouſly every Day; but by their Vices have ſquandred away great Eſtates, and been reduced to that Poverty, as to want a Dinner? Not only diſabled from paying their Debts, if they had a Mind to it, but knew not how to get Bread. (I ſay, paying their Debts, *if they had a Mind to it*, becauſe uſually they that will not pay their juſt Debts when able, afterwards would do it, and have it not.)

But

But there is nothing is the undoing of Tradeſmen, like the Luſts and Debauchery of their Partners, and Correſpondents, their Cuſtomers, and their Debtors. How many a worthy Citizen has been bankrupt by other Mens Crimes, and not by his own? which, if they had been ſuppreſſed and puniſhed formerly, the Cries, and Tears, and Ruine of many a poor Orphan, and helpleſs Widow in this City, might have been prevented.

I hope you can feel the Weight and Force of theſe Things, your own Thoughts may enlarge them. And even ſuch Arguments may have ſome good Effect, where the Men perſwaded by them to do good, may not act out of a good Principle, but only as wiſe in their Generation: For a covetous Father would be againſt the Gaming and Prodigality of his Son, without any regard to God, or the publick Good. (As many that had Abby Lands, were againſt Popery:) But God often uſes Vice againſt Vice, otherwiſe Kingdoms and Churches muſt ſuffer more, or be ſaved by Miracle.

BUT after all that I have ſaid, there is no Duty ſo plain, (tho' Intereſt be connected

nected with it,) againſt which ſomething will not be ſaid, to diſcourage and hinder the Practice, I therefore come to anſwer an Objection or two, by which your Hands may be weakened, or others hindered from joining with you in this worthy Deſign. And,

Firſt, It may be ſaid, 'That 'tis not 'ſo very Honourable and Genteel, to in-'form againſt other Men for their ill 'Manners; 'tis more than we need, to 'be thus buſie in other Mens Matters; 'There is a certain Obloquy and Re-'proach inſeparable from ſuch Work, 'and by the Generality of the World fa-'ſtened upon all that will meddle in it, 'who will not live quietly by their 'Neighbours, tho' they be not ſo good 'as they ſhould be.

1. AS to the Matter of *Reproach*. This is the more neceſſary to be taken notice of, not only as the moſt obvious; but becauſe many, who knew not the Methods that you obſerve, and the Caution and Care you take in your Proceedings, and the very good Effect it hath already had, and how exactly you endeavour to keep to the Laws of God and

and the Land; many, I ſay, that knew not this, had not ſo good Thoughts of your Undertaking at firſt, as now, and as many others we hope will, upon further Acquaintance with your Deſign, and not think it a *Reproach* to join with you therein. As to the Perſons themſelves that are obnoxious to the Law, it would be very great Weakneſs, to neglect your Duty, and Wound your Conſcience, for fear of being ill ſpoken of by Such, whoſe good Word could gain you no Credit and Reputation.

YOU have been told, how ſome of the Princes themſelves, of the firſt Rank and Dignity amongſt the *Jews*, did not think it beneath them, to inform againſt thoſe who tranſgreſſed the Law of God, tho' ſome of their own Rank and Quality were of that Number. *Ezra* ix. There have been many wiſe Law-givers, who have propounded and promiſed Rewards, to Encourage Men to give true and faithful Information againſt Criminals: Eſpecially for ſuch Crimes as greatly tend to the Prejudice of the Publick. As the one hand they had ſevere Puniſhments for falſe Accuſers out of Ma-

lice, Revenge, *&c.* ſo on the other hand Publick Rewards have been promiſed, and publick Honours have been beſtowed, in ſuch Caſes of Information, by the *Romans.*

But I hope I need not uſe ſuch Topicks to You, to venture your Reputation in this Caſe; when you own your ſelves *Chriſtians*, and I have minded you of your *Baptiſm*: You will not think it a Reproach to be true to *that.* You know the Example and Precepts of Chriſt, of doing good to the Evil, and bleſſing thoſe that curſe you, and praying for thoſe that deſpitefully uſe you. I therefore hope, you will not be diſcouraged, if you have not more Acceptance and Succeſs in the Diſcharge of your Duty, than God has promiſed. If you can honour Him, and promote a publick Good; the more you are reviled and ſcorned upon that account, the more praiſe-worthy: There will be the more Vertue and Grace to deſpiſe your Reputation in that caſe. 'Let it periſh, 'ſhould you ſay, if I may but do good; 'But it is in God's Hand, as much as my 'Life. And will not He bear me out, if

'I

'I honeſtly and ſincerely deſire to pro-
'mote his Glory? Am I a Chriſtian, and
'can I doubt it? And have I not found,
'as well as others, that I never conſult
'my own Reputation ſo much, as when
'I moſt heartily endeavour to be faithful
'to God and Conſcience? For *they that honour God, ſhall be honoured*; and they that play the Hypocrite, ſhall be found out, and *Lightly eſteemed.* Thanks be to God, you have many Excellent Perſons of all Perſuaſions to unite with. But if you had not, you ſhould not ſcruple to be God's Witneſſes in the World againſt *Profaneneſs*; and to do all the Good you can, whether Others will, or will not, join with you. If this be to be vile, you muſt reſolve to be more vile. But you need not fear your Reputation: For God hath ſaid it, *Iſa.* 54. 17. *Every Tongue that ſhall riſe in Judgment againſt thee, thou ſhalt condemn, and this is the Heritage of the Servants of the Lord.* When may you apply it, and hope for its Accompliſhment, if not in your Caſe?

DO but Argue with your ſelves a little. Can it be a Diſhonour, to appear

for the Bleſſed God, and your Redeemer, when the very Perſons you would reſtrain and puniſh, (very few excepted,) inwardly condemn Themſelves, and acquit You? for they know you are in the Right, and themſelves in the Wrong. Moſt of them know the Bible, and the Chriſtian Religion, and the Laws of God, and that you do but act according to your Duty. And, ſooner or later, they will all Juſtifie your Proceedings. Your Reputation will be cleared, if you hold on; as the eclipſed Moon, by keeping and continuing her Motion, recovers her Splendor. Your Righteouſneſs will break forth as the Light, to the Shame of all that have thought, or ſpoken hardly of your Undertaking.

IT cannot be diſhonourable for *Gentlemen* of the beſt Character or Quality, to engage in this Deſign, if they conſider the Nature and Uſe of the *Grand Juries* in *England*, which are choſen out of the beſt Families, Men of the beſt Sence, of the beſt Eſtates, and of the beſt Figure in their Country; and they come under an Oath, to make Enquiry of all Offences committed within their County, that

ſhall

ſhall come to their Knowledge: *They are bound to inform the Court againſt Criminals.* Now if it be reckoned a very Honourable thing to ſerve as a Grand Juryman, at the Call of a Magiſtrate; it can never be faulty and ſcandalous, to do this voluntarily at the Call of GOD, for the Service of the publick Intereſt, and with the Countenance of Authority, as is your Caſe. And neither Grand Juries, nor Petty Juries, will ſignifie much, if GOD do not give you Succeſs in your *Worthy Deſign and Undertaking.*

I would fain have it ſeriouſly Conſidered, whether there be any thing that you unite for, that is *in it ſelf Diſhonourable:* And if there be not, your inward Peace, by the Teſtimony of a good Conſcience, that you endeavour to honour and obey GOD, will over-balance the Cenſures of Men. If you can help to reform, and ſo ſave a ſinful and polluted City and Nation from Ruine, (and your Example has already begun to influence other Nations, as well as other Parts of this;) you ſhall not then have need to be aſhamed of it. *Let them be aſhamed, that tranſgreſs without Cauſe.* Let them be

aſhamed, that do ſuch things, that can have no other Fruit and Conſequence, without Repentance, but *Everlaſting Shame.* What little things, to a Man of Conſcience, ſhould be a few hard Words, reproachful Epithets, ill Names, dirty Language, to your Face, or behind your Back? If you cannot bear this for doing well, may not Chriſt be aſhamed of you before his Father and his holy Angels? *The Proud have had me greatly in Deriſion,* ſays the Pſalmiſt, *yet I have not declined from thy Law.* If Men revile you, and ſpeak all manner of Evil againſt you, for Chriſt's ſake, for Obedience to him, for advancing his Intereſt, and ſeeking his Honour; *Happy are ye, the Spirit of God, and of Glory, will reſt upon you.* Was not *Elias* taken for the Troubler of *Iſrael*; and the Apoſtles reviled as thoſe that turned the World upſide down; and the moſt unſufferable of Men; and S. *Paul* himſelf for a peſtilent, ſeditious Fellow? Did not many of the Holy Martyrs die in the Flames, for endeavouring to ſave Men from the Fire of Hell? But I hope I need not ſay more

Pſal. 119. 51.

to

to this Objection; your very Profeſſion of Chriſtianity is enough to Anſwer it.

2. ANOTHER Objection may be ſtarted, 'That you would not be ſerved 'ſo your ſelves: It is unjuſt for one 'Neighbour to accuſe another, one 'Gentleman, one Tradeſman or Acquain-'tance to accuſe another, and bear Wit-'neſs againſt him: If you were the faul-'ty Perſon, you would not be willing 'to be ſo dealt with; *You muſt do to o-'thers, as you would be done by, for this 'is the Law and the Prophets.*

How plauſible ſoever this may appear, I ſhall ſhew, *Firſt*, That it does not reach the Caſe that I am ſpeaking of. *Secondly*, I ſhall turn it upon you, to enforce that which I deſign in this Diſcourſe.

1. THIS Paſſage of our Saviour doth not reach the Caſe. For it is not a compleat and primary Rule of all Humane Actions towards other Men; nor an abſolute unlimited one: But is to be conſidered as a Relief in other Caſes, where we are at a loſs, for want of a particular Rule. As if a Man fail in the World, and

afterwards get an Eſtate, whether he ſhould not pay the whole, doing as he would be done by. But it muſt be uſed only in things firſt Lawful by ſome other Rule; otherwiſe I may be obliged by the Authority of GOD in ſome other Law, to do that to Others, which it may be I would not be very willing to receive: But the Matter is not left to my Liberty, as being determined already. And there are many Caſes, where our own Will and Deſire of others treating us, would be a wrong Guide, a very imperfect and defective Rule. Eſpecially if the Matter be determined before, by any particular Divine and Humane Laws. If a Man be indebted to you, you would not think much if you Arreſt him, if he will not pay: Whereas, it may be, you would not be very willing he ſhould ſerve you ſo. So for a Magiſtrate, if he offends, it may be he would not care to be puniſhed. But think a little what is *Juſt*, and *Reaſonable*, and fit in this Caſe: And in ſuch Points only this Rule holds. He that is to inflict the Puniſhment, is doubtleſs under leſs Prejudice, and ſuppoſed to be a more Impartial

Judge,

Judge, than the Offender that is to be puniſhed. And if you were in his Caſe, you would think and act, as he does; and therefore cannot reaſonably expect to eſcape now: For it would be Cruelty to the greater, and far better part of the Society, if ſuch Offences ſhould go unpuniſhed.

2. I ſhall turn it upon you, to enforce that which I deſign in this Diſcourſe, from this very Rule, of *doing to Others as you would be done by.* Is there any of you, that is willing to be defrauded, in his Perſon, Eſtate, Name, *&c.* however unwilling to be puniſhed, when guilty? Were any of you a Magiſtrate? (and many of you may live to be ſo) Would you not deſire the Concurrence, the Countenance and Aſſiſtance of your Neighbours and Fellow-Citizens, in the Execution of your Office? Whatever you would reaſonably deſire and approve from Others in that caſe, you are now to render to them. And as to your Selves too, you will do well to keep this Rule in your Eye, in the purſuit of your great Deſign. And therefore to Compaſſionate the offending Perſons, charitably

tably to desire and seek their Repentance and Amendment: Not to magnifie or multiply their Faults, without Reason; but to put the fairest Construction upon their Words and Actions: If their Fault will admit of any Plea, Diminution or Excuse, not to reject it, but to make the same Allowance to others, as, in the same Circumstances, you would reasonably desire from any Honest Man.

IN a Word, not to transgress the Bounds of Charity and Mercy, even in the Administration of Justice, because you your selves would desire it in the like Case. And on this Account, unless the Criminals be obstinate and impudent, you will do well to treat them with Meekness, and Gentleness of Speech and Behaviour: For bitter and upbraiding Words, and a morose sour Carriage, will but help to make them Obstinate. And the Faults and Follies of Mankind, as well as their Sufferings in the World, are Objects of Pitty. Hard Words, rude and unkind Speeches, will do harm to young Sinners; and Mankind is so made, that they will hardly do good to any Body. However, remember to do as you would

be

be done by. And ſo I am led to give you ſome Advice before I was aware, with reference to your Proceedings, which is the *Third Thing* I propoſed.

AND that which I have now ſaid, directs me to begin with this Counſel, *Firſt*, That tho' you ought to be Impartial, yet you muſt *have Compaſſion, making a difference* between ſome ſorts of Criminals and others. It is the Apoſtle's Advice, *Jude* 22. Tho' that may relate to the Governours of the Church, yet 'tis very applicable here. As there is a Difference in Crimes, and the Law makes a Difference in Puniſhment; ſo there is in Criminals. If it be the firſt or ſecond Fault, it is not all one Caſe, as with a hardened habituated Sinner. You will eaſily Apprehend, that a green Wound, and an old Ulcer, are not to be cured by the ſame Application. A ſharp Reproof, a ſerious Admonition, or a ſevere Threatning, may do more good on Some, than the ſevereſt Puniſhment on Others, who are paſt Shame. There are ſome who fall by Surprize, and not by Deliberation and cuſtomary Wickedneſs; and ſuch

ought

ought to be pitied, and reſtored in the Spirit of Meekneſs: There is not ſo much of vicious Habit, and Stubbornneſs of Will, in ſuch Caſes, as of the Frailty of Humane Nature.

2. HOWEVER, you muſt be ſo far Impartial, notwithſtanding this Compaſſion, as not to ſpare any Man, becauſe he is of your Party and Perſwaſion in Matters of Religion: Nor to ſeek for Crimes and Offences in thoſe of *one Party*, rather than *another*. For ſuch Tranſgreſſions of the Law are equally faulty in all. Let Men pretend to what Strictneſs they will in Matters of poſitive Inſtitution and Worſhip, theſe Immoralities are heinous, and to be puniſhed by the Judges. Your Partiality in this Caſe, would diſcover, that you do not hate the Sin, ſo much, as ſeek an Advantage againſt the Party you do not like. And it may give an Occaſion to others to raiſe the old Scandal, That you believe God ſees no Sin in his People, and therefore Men ſhould not: And that the Saints cannot Sin, nor Believers do themſelves any harm by Sin: And being aſſured of eſcaping Eternal Puniſhment, they

ought

ought to be ſaved from Temporal. This would be the greateſt Reproach, on the Profeſſion of Religion that can be.

AND withal take heed, not to proſecute any Man that is Faulty in this Matter, becauſe he is your particular Enemy, or hath diſobliged, or injured you. For whatever he ſuffers in this Caſe, tho' he never ſo much deſerves it, what you do can never be pleaſing to GOD, as being from a wrong Principle, nor is it likely to reclaim the Offender.

NEITHER muſt you neglect Juſtice, becauſe the Offender is your Friend, or Acquaintance. Not that I would be thought to encourage you to betray Converſation, to be falſe to your Friend, and if an Offence be Committed only in your Preſence, to go preſently to a Magiſtrate, as an Accuſer. I ſhould think a faithful, friendly, and ſharp Reproof in that caſe, for the firſt or ſecond time at leaſt, may be ſufficient; if there be hopes of their Repentance. You will find Caſes enough, where is no ſuch Confidence ariſing from Converſation, and no danger of ſuch a

Charge

Charge of Treachery to be objected againſt your Proceedings.

3. LET me beſeech you to beware how you *Tempt* others to Sin, on a Supopſition that their Character is bad, and their Inclinations naught, and then Accuſe them for Complying with the Temptation which you offered, it may be with Artifice and Cunning, and the promiſe of Secrecy. 'Tis poſſible there may be Perſons of very ill Inclinations, who would have ſtopped there, if they had not been actually tempted. And there is an unſpeakable Hazard, leſt the Perſons that tempt in order to Conviction, ſhould enter into the Temptation, and fall into the ſnare of the Devil, and be overcome Themſelves. Take heed therefore of catching the Infection you would cure: Leſt, by endeavouring to ſnatch others out of the Fire, they pull you into it. God grant it never may be ſo.

4. THERE is another thing as to *Impartiality*, wherein your work may be difficult; and that is, that many are guilty of the ſame Crimes, who are above your reach: Perſons of that Quality

lity and Figure, Character and Intereſt in the World, that you dare not meddle with them. For Drunkenneſs and Whoredom, Profane Swearing and Curſing, *&c.* are not the Vices only of Servants, but Maſters; not of meaner People only, but of your Equals and Superiors; not of thoſe that wear Liveries, but of the Gentlemen whom they follow. *I Anſwer*, A little Courage and Reſolution, with Wiſdom and Prudence, may aſſiſt you to do your Duty as to this. Doubtleſs you will not think that you ought to keep the Favour and good Opinion of any ſuch, by conniving at their Faults, when it is in your power to puniſh, For what is an Offence againſt the Law of God and the Land in one Man, is ſo in another. But in ſome Caſes, as matters now are, where it would be likely to do more hurt than good, I think you may forbear: And believe, and hope that the Puniſhment of meaner Perſons, will ſo far influence the Greater Sort, as to bring them to be more private, and leſs ſcandalous in their Crimes. And ſometimes the beſt

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Rebuke that can be given ſome great Men and Superiours, is to let them ſee what is the juſt and deſerved Puniſhment of their own Faults, by the Puniſhment of Inferiours, for the ſame things which they know themſelves to be guilty of.

AND thus I have, faithfully and plainly told you your Duty, with the principal Objections againſt it, and with the proper Limitations and Cautions. What remains, is to Exhort and Urge you to the Practice.

SHALL I ſet before you the Publick Intereſt of the Kingdom? Or the Kindneſs to the particular Perſons who offend? Or the Honour of our Nation and City? Or the juſt Expectations of GOD and all the World, after this Publick Peace? Or the Conſideration of the Union of ſo many Worthy Members of the National Church with Proteſtant Diſſenters in this Undertaking? There are many things may be urged under all theſe Heads, ſuitable to our preſent purpoſe: I will name a few, and ſo Conclude.

I. THE

I. THE publick Intereſt of the Community is maintained by the Execution of good Laws. The Welfare of Society, and its Publick Peace, cannot elſe be preſerved. The very Conſtitution, by which you enjoy your many Bleſſings in a private Capacity, muſt otherwiſe ſink. Gouts, and Palſies, and Conſumptions, and other Diſeaſes of the Body, are not more certainly deſtructive to the Health and Life of a particular Perſon, than the Impunity of Profane and Wicked People to the Peace and Happineſs of a State and Nation.

THE Divine Preſence and Favour, (which is the Strength and Stability of a People,) cannot otherwiſe be ſecured, or his threatned Judgments diverted. Wicked Cities and Societies God will puniſh in *this World*, and, *as ſuch*, they cannot otherwiſe be puniſhed at all; tho' particular Perſons ſhall be accountable in *another*. The Crimes you endeavour to puniſh, you know, are ſuch, for which the Wrath of God

cometh upon the Children of Diſobedience: For which a flying Roll of Written-Curſes is declared to be ſent: For which other Lands have been made to mourn. And on the contrary, by executing Judgment for ſuch Offences, we read of Divine Judgments removed, and his Plagues ſtayed. A few, that would publickly and reſolutely own God and Religion, might have ſaved a City. *If you can find a Man that executeth Judgment, and ſeeketh Truth, I will pardon Jeruſalem*, ſaith God by one Prophet, *Jer.* 5. 5. *I ſought for a Man, and found none to ſtand in the Gap, therefore I poured out mine Indignation upon them*, ſaith another, *Ezek.* 22. Though at the ſame time there was a Remnant, it may be, of Seven Thouſand unknown Perſons, that did ſecretly fear and worſhip God in their Hearts: But they did not preſerve the Nation from Captivity, and the City from Deſtruction, as a Few, openly and reſolutely owning God and Religion, would have done.

BUT

BUT if GOD had not threatened Judgment, ſuch a People would ſoon undo themſelves by their own Vices: Which muſt neceſſarily weaken, divide, diſhonour, impoveriſh, and deſtroy them. Great Numbers of Subjects, that in a time of War, might defend their Country, are effeminated, debauched, diſeaſed, and made uncapable of bearing Arms; fitter for an Hoſpital, than an Army; to be under a Phyſician, or Chyrurgeon, rather than a General; who inſtead of being able to uſe a Sword or Musket, need a Crutch. By unreſtrained, unpuniſhed Vice and Wickedneſs, the very Genius of a Nation is changed, a generous and brave People diſpirited: By Luxury and Debauchery they are ſoftened and diſſolved into Cowardize: They loſe their Reputation abroad, and have no Strength at home; and are an eaſie Prey to Foreign Enemies: But, without that, muſt ſink under their own Burden, and in a little time will undo themſelves.

II. IT will be Kindneſs to the Particular Perſons, whoſe Manners are ſo corrupt as to come under the Laſh of the Law: For it is not of Capital Puniſhments we now ſpeak. *He that ſinneth againſt God, wrongeth his own Soul.* And is it no Kindneſs to preſerve them from wounding, and hurting, and deſtroying themſelves; from deforming the Beauty, darkning the Glory, debaſing the Purity, weakning the Strength, diſturbing the Peace, undermining the Life and Happineſs of their own Souls. 'Tis to hinder them from laying violent Hands on themſelves, who like mad Men would thruſt a Sword into their own Hearts. And yet how many ſuch Spectacles of Compaſſion are there, where Vice is not reſtrained and puniſhed? The Sight of a Wreck at Sea by a Tempeſt, or the Deſolations of a Country by War, (where their Cities have been plundered, and Houſes burnt, and dead Carkaſſes lay expoſed in the Field and Streets;) This would affect you with

Com-

Compaſſion : But the unreſtrained Wickedneſs of the World, is a worſe Sight. To ſee a Man weltering in his own Blood, and gaſping for Breath, after he hath wounded and ſtabbed himſelf, is a doleful Sight ; But the Sinfulneſs, and Miſery of Mankind by Reaſon of Sin, ſhould much rather move our Compaſſion.

ARE you not kind to them ? to ſave them from Beggery, from Ignominy, from Sickneſs, from Death, and from the Wrath of God for ever ? Is it not kindneſs, to ſave them from languiſhing, painful Sickneſs? from Feavers and Dropſies, from Gouts and Cholicks, Conſumptions, and worſe Diſtempers, that are the Conſequents of their particular Vices, and of a diſorderly Life ? and withal to ſave them from an untimely Death by the Sword of Juſtice?

'TIS impoſſible to tell from what Miſchiefs you preſerve a Man, who is reclaimed but from that *one Vice* of *Drunkenneſs :* For who knows what Miſchiefs and Deſtruction he may

run into, by running into that Exceſs; when once the Wine has filled him with more Spirits than he is able to govern? To be ſure, you ſave them from a great deal of Anguiſh and Trouble of Conſcience: For even they that laugh, and ſport, and drink away their Fears and Remorſe; yet when the Company is broken up, and the Heat of the Wine is over, their gloomy miſgiving Thoughts return upon them, and they care not to be alone, or in the dark, for fear of their own guilty Selves.

HOW many of theſe need to be pitied, eſpecially who have had *a good Education*; to whom it was more difficult to run into an exceſs of Riot: For they muſt ſtifle many more Convictions, and be at a great deal of Pains, to ſilence the Clamours of Conſcience; They muſt lay aſide Conſideration and ſerious Thoughts, forſake the Publick Aſſemblies for Divine Worſhip, neglect the Reading of the Bible, avoid the ſerious Company of thoſe that would reprove them;

them; They muſt leave off ſecret Prayer, they muſt accuſtom themſelves to looſe Converſation, and admit Principles of Atheiſm and Infidelity, before they can adventure to commit ſome great Crimes. And it may be for a good while Conſcience will ſpeak louder in their Ears, and the Flames of Hell flaſh oftener, and more terribly in their Eyes, becauſe of *their Education.* They have much ado to hold on; and if they be ſick, or like to die, how ready are they to Deſpair: Unleſs they leave the World like ſtupified Brutes, they are uſually in moſt dreadful Agonies. Is it not kind, to pity 'em, and endeavour to ſave them from all this, and from Eternal Damnation after all?

ARE you not kind to them, when you conſider they cannot be undone for ever by a ſinful Courſe, without being miſerable now, and you would fain preſerve them from both? Every Week's Experience will confirm the Truth of this. If Men reflect, and conſider what they have got by a vi-

cious diſorderly Life: *What Fruit* have they had in the Way of Sin? Let them bring in their Account, and let us view the *Sum Total.* What Fruit have they had? but ſo much Shame and Fear, ſo much Care and Trouble, ſo much Diſgrace and Diſapointment, Diſſatisfaction and Diſquiet; ſo many Sorrows and Calamities; an ill Name, an empty Purſe, a decayed Fortune, a diſeaſed Body, an accuſing Conſcience, *&c.* And all theſe by ſuch Sins as you would reſtrain, puniſh, and prevent. And is it not Kindneſs, thus to convince them, that if they will periſh for ever, they muſt purchaſe Eternal Miſery by preſent Puniſhment; and run the Hazard at leaſt of being Undone in *this World*, that they may be Damned in *the next*?

III. IS not the Honour of the City, and of the Nation, concerned in this? To revive thoſe Vertues which were anciently the Glory of *England*, and to check and reform thoſe Diſorders which

which the Licentiouſneſs of the latter Reigns has introduced? Is Reverence for the Bleſſed God, his Name, his Word, his Day, his Inſtitutions; Is Honeſty, Truth and Juſtice, Sobriety, Temperance, and Chaſtity, leſs a Duty in our Age, than heretofore? Were theſe things only fit to be admired in former Times, without being practiſed in ours? 'Tis certainly for the Honour of *London*, (which is one of the moſt conſiderable Cities in the World on other Accounts,) that baſe Aſſaſſinations, Murders, and Robberies, are not ſo common every Day and Night, here, as in many Cities of *Spain* and *Italy*: That a Man may walk ſafely, upon a lawful Occaſion, at any time of the Night, from one end of the City to the other, without hazard of his Life by Piſtol or Stilletto. Would it not be a greater Honour to this City, (and the Proteſtant Religion profeſſed here,) to be able to walk up and down, and not meet a Drunkard reeling in the Streets, or hear the GOD of Heaven blaſphemed,

phemed, or a prophane Oath ſworn in the Places of publick Concourſe? not to hear Men curſe and ſwear, and pray to GOD to damn them? (which is, and ſhould be the Buſineſs of their their Lives to eſcape and prevent.) On which account alſo common Converſation, and publick Converſe is uneaſie to a Serious Chriſtian: For the Company of many witty and ingenious Perſons muſt be declin'd, and avoided by a Man of Conſcience, by Reaſon of their Oaths and Curſes, and impious Language, which otherwiſe would be both pleaſing and profitable. However, If we cannot go ſo far in ſuch a Reformation, as to hope to live to ſee all this; let us do *what we can*, and beg that the next Generation may carry it further.

IV. SHALL I urge you to theſe joint Endeavours for ſuppreſſing Profeneſs, from *the Seaſonableneſs* of them, after the *Publick Peace* which GOD hath mercifully given us?

Many

Many Penal Laws, in a time of War, are more faintly executed, becauſe the Government may ſtand in need of the Aſſiſtance of the Bad, as well as the Good: But when the Sword of War abroad is ſheathed, that of Civil Juſtice ſhould be drawn againſt *Profaneneſs*, becauſe the Government has occaſion only for the Service of *Good Men* in a time of *Peace:* And hath not ſo much other Buſineſs to divert them from executing the Laws. So that not to puniſh Vice in a time of Peace, will be a greater Reflection on the Government, than if the War had continued. And alas, how little Security can we have of the Continuance of Peace, or of any of the Bleſſings of it, without Reformation? *Is it Peace, Jehu?* Is there, can there be a laſting well-grounded *Peace*, while Whoredoms and Adulteries, Perjuries and Blaſphemies, profane Oaths and Curſes, and other Abominations, *unpuniſhed*, are ſo many?

Laſtly,

Laſtly, Conſider, Theſe are Things that *we All Agree in*. The viſible Countenance of ſo many worthy Perſons, of different Perſwaſions in leſſer Things, thus to abet the Cauſe of Religion, and to diſcourage Profaneneſs, is a Great Thing. It may help to bring Sobriety and Serious Godlineſs into requeſt. Whereas if good Men be timorous and baſhful, if they be afraid, or aſhamed to take the Part of Religion, (tho' the Laws of GOD are ſeconded by thoſe of the Nation ;) the Profligate and Profane will be more hardened, more numerous and inſolent. For there is hardly any thing does more embolden Men in Sin, than to ſee Others commit the like with Impunity. And we may juſtly apprehend, that the ſpreading of Debauchery in City and Country, is very much owing to this: That Good Men, who are inwardly Friends to Religion, ſtand *Neuters*, and will not concern themſelves to appear againſt Profaneneſs, and help to ſtem the Tide.

Tide. 'Tis in this Caſe, as one ſays of *a Plague*, If the Sound and Healthy will withdraw themſelves in a time of Infection, and do nothing to ſtop the Peſtilence; if only the Sick and Infected do walk abroad, and appear in publick; how unavoidably muſt the Contagion ſpread, and the Plague reign, even to Deſolation, in ſuch a place?

I AM not without hope, that this laudable and Chriſtian Undertaking will promote a better Underſtanding between the Proteſtants of the National Church, and Thoſe who in ſome things diſſent from it. As far as we have attained, let us agree to mind the ſame thing. And to ſuppreſs Immorality and Profaneneſs, I am ſure, is one of thoſe things, wherein we *ought*, and *may*, and *do* Agree. And by more familiar Acquaintance with one another, you may find ſo many Perſons, of both ſorts, worthy of your Eſteem and Love, as will take off many Prejudices, deſtroy Bitterneſs and Rancor, and cure that Evil

ſpeak-

ſpeaking and Detraction, which hath been complained of on all ſides; It may tend to heal that Moroſeneſs, and Reſervedneſs, and Diſtruſt of one another, which has kept us at ſuch a Diſtance: And let us ſee, that there was no ſufficient reaſon for ſuch an Eſtrangment. I promiſe my ſelf, that Diſſenters will be ſo wiſe and charitable, as to be of *Luther*'s mind; When ſo much was done at *Marpurg*, towards an Agreement between him and the *Helvetians*, he ſaid on that Occaſion, that he would not allow that Praiſe to the other Party, to be more deſirous of Peace and Concord than he. There is the more ground to hope for this, in the preſent Age, becauſe we agree in the *Myſtery of GOD, even of the Father, and the Lord JESUS CHRIST*, I mean in the Doctrinal Articles of *The Church of England*; and thereupon we have ſufficient ground, that *our Hearts be knit together in Love*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 2 *Coll.* 2.

'TIS

'TIS high time, *My Brethren*, to lay aſide our paltry Quarrels, and Contentions with one another, and ſeek the Common Good; and mutually to make Allowance for the different Complexions of Mens Minds, and their different degrees of Light, for the Variety of their Tempers and Educations, for different Growths, and Meaſures, and Attainments in Chriſtianity, in order to mutual Forbearance of one another in Love. For it can never be denied, that, amongſt Thoſe of different Perſwaſions among Chriſtians, there may be, and is, the ſame deſire and diligence in ſearching after Truth, the ſame Love to GOD and Devotedneſs to him, and deſire to pleaſe him, the ſame Integrity and Purity of Intention, the ſame Holineſs of Heart and Life, which is accepted of God. And ſhall any of us be ſo diſingenuous and uncharitable, as to think none can get to Heaven, but Chriſtians juſt of our ſize, form, and way? Or ſhall I be ſo peeviſh

peeviſh and abſurd, as to be angry with another Man, becauſe he is not of my Opinion, when he hath every whit as much Reaſon, (that is, none at all,) to be angry with me for not being of his? The want of conſidering theſe things, and thereupon holding the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace, hath more wounded Religion, and hindred the Progreſs of it, and been more prejudicial to its National Intereſt, than all the Oppoſition of Infidels and Hereticks, that have openly attacked the Reformed Doctrine. If all Good Men, amongſt Proteſtants, would reſolve to love one another, and bear with one another in their leſſer Differences; you would quickly ſee that Truth would more prevail, and Holineſs with it. For unfeigned Love to all Men, and a ſpecial Love to good Men, according to their ſeveral degrees of Worth and Goodneſs; is ſo agreeable to Reaſon, to the Social Nature, and common Intereſt of Mankind, and to the Rule

and

and Pattern of our Bleſſed Saviour; that it muſt needs not only be generally approv'd, but have a mighty Influence to make the World better, and to recover the Beauty and Glory, of the Chriſtian Reformed Religion in theſe Nations.

IT may therefore humble and ſhame us, to think we have been ſo little able to bear with one another in our leſſer Differences; when we take a View of the miſerable Condition of the World, and of the Chriſtian Churches, in other Parts of the Earth. Hath not Paganiſm and Mahometaniſm over-run a great part, which was once a Chriſtian, but hath now loſt the very Name? And is not a great part of Chriſtendom over-run with Popiſh Tyranny and Superſtition, and thereby hath little left of Chriſtianity, but the Name? Is there any part of God's Earth, where Chriſtian Religion doth flouriſh, more than in *England*, *Scotland* and *Ireland*? And ſhall we not at laſt be ſo wiſe and happy, as to know

the Things that belong to our common Intereſt? Are we not Members of the ſame Myſtical Body, and Servants of the ſame Lord, Profeſſors of the ſame Faith, Partakers of the ſame Hope, and Heirs of the ſame Promiſe of Eternal Life, by *Jeſus Chriſt*? And beſides this, united by a National Intereſt, at this Day, to hold together againſt the common Enemies of our Chriſtian Faith on the one hand, and the common Enemies of our Country, and Civil Liberties on the other?

To Conclude, Let me beſeech and intreat you, from all that has been ſaid, to go on with Courage, under the Banner of *Chriſt*, and with the Prayers of all good Men: Continue in the Love of GOD, and Zeal for his Glory, in Love and Loyalty to the King's Majeſty, and in Peace and Concord one with another. Let us join with united Hearts for the Publick Good; and, forgetting all that is paſt, reſolve to look forward. Fear not to diſpleaſe Men, if you may but honour God. Be as diligent to check

and

and reſtrain Vice, as others are to ſpread it; as knowing how much better a Maſter you ſerve, and how much better Work it is, to endeavour to ſave the Church and State, the Souls and Bodies of Men, than to be employed in hurting and deſtroying them. And be ſure begin at home, at your own Souls, and Lives, and then as to your Families, and Relations of ſeveral ſorts in this City. And on that account, where you have a Vote, omit not your Duty in the Choice of good Magiſtrates; as knowing *where the Righteous bear Rule, the People rejoyce.* They who are negligent in this, and other Inſtances of Publick Service, which their Place and Station in this City call them to, they betray their Country, are unfaithful to their Truſt, and ſhall anſwer to God for their omiſſive Treachery.

YOU have begun well, remember the Reward of being faithful. Let not your Hearts fail; for *he that follows after Righteouſneſs and Mercy, he ſhall find Life, Righteouſneſs and Honour.*

And

And tho' you ſhould fail of the deſired Succeſs of your Endeavours, (which you have no Reaſon to think, by the excellent Service that has been done already,) ſo as to loſe your Labour and your Coſt; you will not loſe your Charity and your Zeal: For GOD will Accept you. To his gracious Providence, Promiſe, and Spirit, I commend you, for your Aſſiſtance, Encouragement, and Reward.

To the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be Everlaſting Glory. Amen.

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